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Kingdom Investing

Jeff Rogers / Lamplighter Bible Study

Matthew 6:19-24

Man has the natural inclination to pursue “stuff.” One commentator says, “*We are strongly inclined to be wrapped up in seeking, acquiring, enjoying, and protecting material possessions.*” Radio, television, and a host of media outlets are driven by marketing revenue and the consumer’s internal drive to have more, faster, newer, better, stronger stuff. This is not unique to the 21st century. Luke noted the Pharisees’ love of money (Luke 16:14).

Paul cautioned Timothy about the snare of riches. **1 Timothy 6:9–10**, *But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation, into a snare [picture a trap that snaps its prey], into many senseless [without reason] and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. 10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evils. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.*

Further, Paul cautions the rich. **1 Timothy 6:17–19**, *As for the rich in this present age, charge them not to be haughty [arrogance by superiority], nor to set their hopes on the uncertainty of riches, but on God, who richly provides us with everything to enjoy. 18 They are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share, 19 thus storing up treasure for themselves as a good foundation for the future, so that they may take hold of that which is truly life.*

Additionally, wealth is not a sign of God’s blessing on a person, just as poverty is not a sign of God’s curse on an individual or community.

I. A Treasure Worth Pursuing (Matthew 6:19-21)

- A. The instruction not to “treasure up treasure” on earth (6:19a)
 - 1. It is a warning against stockpiling or hoarding wealth that is not being used.
 - 2. It is a warning against having wealth displayed or creating a life of laziness and overindulgence.
 - a) See Luke 12:16-21
 - 3. God is not forbidding a person to have wealth but instead warning against wealth having the person
 - a) Abraham – had significant wealth, influence, and military power.
 - b) Job – had great wealth that God took away and then made him wealthier (Job 42:12-17)
 - 4. The Bible counsels us to use good business practices and to work hard.
 - a) **Matthew 25:27**, *Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest.*
 - b) The example of the ant (Proverbs 6:6-8)
 - c) **Proverbs 14:23**, *In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty.*
 - d) **Proverbs 24:3–4**, *By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established; 4 by knowledge the rooms are filled with all precious and pleasant riches.*
 - e) **Proverbs 28:19**, *Whoever works his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows worthless pursuits will have plenty of poverty.*
 - f) Provide for our children, **2 Corinthians 12:14**, *...For children are not obligated to save up for their parents, but parents for their children.*
 - g) **2 Thessalonians 3:10**, *...If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.*
- B. The fleeting nature of earthly treasures (6:19b)
 - 1. Moths—In Jesus’ day, clothing indicated wealth. The best clothes were wool, a favorite of moths!
 - 2. Rust – “an eating.” This could be a reference to grain (a valuable commodity) that is eaten by varmints.
 - 3. Thieves – “break in” to dig through or break through. Digging up/through a house for treasure.
- C. The only absolute security is heavenly security (6:20)
- D. Wealth is a heart issue (6:21) (James 4:4) Your treasure indicates where your heart already IS!
 - 1. The example of the exiles returning to Jerusalem from Babylon (Nehemiah 8:5-8) Led to the people

faithfully supporting the Temple. (chapters 9 and 10)

2. The example of Israel in the days of Moses (Ex 35:21, 29;36:6-7)

II. A Vision Worth Chasing (Matthew 6:22-23)

- A. The “Lamp” of the body.
 1. Our eyes are the window into our hearts. They provide illumination to our hearts.
 2. If they are “healthy,” then our whole body will be “full of light.” (Matthew 6:22)
 - a) In a metaphorical sense, our eyes determine our spiritual health
 - b) If the eyes are in good health, then our heart is in full of “light.”
 3. If they are “bad,” our whole body is “full of darkness.” (Matthew 6:23)
 - a) **Proverbs 28:22**, *A stingy man [literally, “evil eye”] hastens after wealth and does not know that poverty will come upon him.*
 - b) **Matthew 20:15**, *Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge [literally, “evil eye” or “morally evil”] my generosity?’*
- B. Our eyes affect our hearts.
 1. **Lamentations 3:51 (KJV)** *Mine eye affecteth mine heart because of all the daughters of my city.*
 2. **Proverbs 7:1–3**, *My son, keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you; 2 keep my commandments and live; keep my teaching as the apple of your eye; 3 bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart.*
 3. **Job 31:1**, *“I have made a covenant with my eyes; how then could I gaze at a virgin?”*
- C. The caution in Proverbs 23
 1. Guardedly, cautiously observe (with our eyes) (Proverbs 23:1)
 2. Practice temperance and moderation (with our appetites) (Proverbs 23:2)
 3. Restrain the fulfillment of fleshly desires (Proverbs 23:3)
 - a) **Psalms 141:4**, *Do not let my heart incline to any evil, to busy myself with wicked deeds in company with men who work iniquity, and let me not eat of their delicacies!*
 4. The comparison to wealth (Proverbs 23:4-5)
 5. The warning about keeping bad company (Proverbs 23:6-8)

III. A Master Worth Serving (Matthew 6:24)

- A. The principle of one master (slavery vs. employment).
 1. **Luke 16:13**, *No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money.”*
 2. **Romans 6:16**, *Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?*
 3. **James 4:4**, *You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*
- B. John Calvin said, “Where riches hold the dominion of the heart, God has lost His authority.”
- C. The examples of trusting in God or mammon (Mammon came to be known as “that in which one trusts;” designating a god, which is why the NIV capitalizes the word Money!)
 1. Negative
 - a) Achan – Israel suffered defeat after Jericho at Ai due to the sin of Achan Joshua 6:19-21.
 - (1) Cloak from Shinar (Babylonia, tower of Babel)
 - (2) 200 shekels of silver (appx 100 ounces) / about 500-600 days of average wage.
 - (3) 50-shekels gold bar (appx 25 ounces).
 - b) Solomon
 - (1) His wealth (1 Kings 10:14-29)
 - (2) His failure (1 Kings 11:1-4)
 2. Positive
 - a) Hezekiah in the face of the Assyrian Army. Isaiah 36-37.
 - b) David before Goliath (1 Samuel 17:45-47)